

Hallo Everybody

I hope that you are all well and have enjoyed cycling throughout the summer and autumn. We have enjoyed some exceptionally good rides recently and have been very fortunate with the weather. It is great that ride attendances seem to have returned to the pre pandemic numbers.



I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed articles. If you would like to write an article next time, or in the future, please use Calibri font size 12 and, if you would like to send photographs, please insert them in the article. It needs to be in a single column format otherwise, my computer (or maybe it's my brain) can't seem to adjust it to fit! Please don't let this put you off, if you want to write a short piece, I'll do my best to include it whatever format it comes in. Perhaps you will find yourself with time on your hands in the cold January or February days and will decide to write an article. Isn't it great that we don't have to pay to read Winged Wheel any more? If you have paid for this year, please contact Jon Gorringer, treasurer at treasurer.ctcsuffolk@gmail.com so that it he can refund it to you.

Judy Scott

Winged Wheel Editor

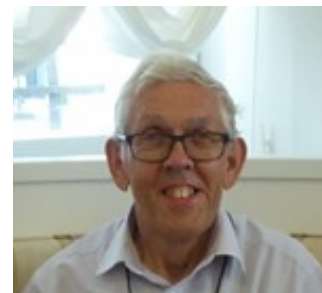
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PRESIDENT'S PIECE DECEMBER 2021

Are we ever going to be clear of the threat of reintroducing covid restrictions, I wonder? As I am writing this piece it is still uncertain whether we will be able to enjoy a relatively unrestricted Christmas this year. However, we should be thankful that we have had a good run of near-normal club rides and numbers seem to be returning to pre-covid levels. I would like to pay tribute to our Rides Coordinators, Derek Worrall and Richard Watson, for all the hard work they have put in to produce a full programme of rides, and encourage members to join those rides, through all the difficulties of the past 12 months.



So much for the past and the present, we now need to look to the future. When I was elected in 2019 it was for the usual term of three years, after I had served an apprenticeship as Vice President for the three year term of the previous President. With the change of financial year end to 31st March, to coincide with Cycling UK, and the consequent change of

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AGM date from November to May, I have to consider whether to stand down from the President's role after two and a half years or stay for three and a half years.

As we are still not clear of the pandemic, which has dominated most of my term so far and will continue to do so for some time to come, I am happy to continue until May 2023. It is, of course, still open to any member who objects, to nominate an alternative at the 2022 AGM. In either case, it would be wise to fill the vacant Vice President role, at the forthcoming AGM, so he/she is ready to take over as President at the end of the Presidential term. I am raising this now to give members plenty of time to consider who they would like as President to carry the club forward after my time is up.

Finally, a Merry Christmas to you all and my very best wishes for a happy, healthy and safe 2022.

Michael

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Secretary's Notes

Two items came up for discussion at our recent Committee Meeting which may be worth reporting back on.

First, with Thursday rides in particular, we have been attracting large numbers of riders recently. This can make a group difficult for the leader to manage on the road, as well as causing long queues at refreshment stops.

Various solutions were discussed, but in the end we resolved to try and manage the situation by better balancing of the numbers in each group, and encouraging splitting of groups on the road where needed.

Nevertheless I feel the situation is on a knife edge. On some Thursdays there is no problem, on others there definitely is. It's not just down to the numbers on a ride, but the route chosen, capacity of the refreshment venues etc. Personally I'm relaxed about leading a long straggly group on quiet lanes, where you need to pull aside occasionally to let a vehicle pass even when cycling on your own. It's more of an issue where you are on a busier road with a continual stream of vehicles trying to overtake.

We'll keep it under review. An obvious solution is to raise the number of groups from 2 to 3, and probably needing to end the tradition of everyone meeting up at a combined lunch stop. But (as I've mentioned in previous articles) this requires more leaders to volunteer and involves more work for the Coordinator, as well as being a bit less sociable.



Another decision made at the Committee Meeting was to do with the Sunday and Thursday annual "Points" awards. These were not awarded last year due to disruption to the rides programme. Moreover, due to the change in Cycling UK's end of year from September to March, we now find our annual prize giving lunch in Jan/Feb – shared with the Wolsey Road Club – to be the wrong time of year. So we have switched to using the calendar year for these awards (like the Wolsey). For 2021 however, due to restrictions on cycling earlier in the year, we will restrict the awards to attendance during the last 6 months (July to December)

John.

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Sunday Rides Report

We have been able to provide a full programme of rides in this quarter.

Covid guidance did become more relaxed until very recently, when there has been a tightening up due to the development of virus variants.

Cycling UK continues to recommend a maximum of 15 riders in a group. Face coverings are to be worn in crowded environments.

The rides continue to be supported by a good number of club members. The numbers on Easy riders has continued to be markedly higher than that on Medium Rides.

At this time of year there is an elevenses stop and a lunch stop, with both rides meeting up at elevenses on a number of occasions.

Both rides are now riding out from Crown Pools and a good number ride out independently to elevenses.

We have tried a few new venues.

Constable Park at Brantham is nicely situated and almost too busy for elevenses. Both rides had an afternoon tea stop there.

There was a Medium ride to the Northern Gateway Sports Park, just north of Colchester, for elevenses followed by The Olive Branch Syrian cafe in Wivenhoe.

One of the most popular rides was to the home of Ken and Maureen, in Hadleigh on Remembrance Sunday. A few rides stopped at Hadleigh war memorial for the two-minute silence.

Ashfield Village Hall is operating again, following major repair work. The visit for elevenses was well supported, despite the grim weather.

Ride Leaders:

The list of rides for January and February will be published on the CTC Suffolk website later in December.

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We have a list of ride leaders and if you would like to be added to that number, please let me know. Guidance and assistance can be provided.

One new leader has stepped forward this quarter, which has been appreciated.

Winter Notes:

One of our number recently had a breakdown involving a cycle tyre which left him stranded. A few tips are suggested:

Know your location. You may be asked for a postcode which can be tricky. The what3words app can locate where you are precisely (as long as you have a smartphone).

Know your mobile phone number!

There is a rescue service available for an annual fee: <https://www.eta.co.uk/bicycle-insurance/cycle-rescue/>

Carry a variety of tools along with spare tubes/puncture repair equipment.

In winter, consider carrying a space blanket and/or an additional layer to keep warm.

Carry some emergency food, just in case.

Derek Worrall

Sunday Rides Coordinator

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THURSDAY RIDES

After what we've all experienced these last 20 months with Covid, I feel that every Thursday spent out on a bike is a bonus. Many others must feel much the same way too, because the numbers out riding at present have hardly ever been bettered. That's not been without its challenges, though - sometimes we've had so many riders out that we've been concerned for safety and for the capacity of our elevenses stops to feed and water us all.

Covid has brought some changes to our refreshments, too; more and more coffee shops are springing up, giving us a wider choice and novelty. In this last quarter we've visited three new places for elevenses, and there are four more new venues slated for January & February. With lunchtime pubs it's the opposite story; places are closing, or opening only on some days, or not doing food all the time, or too short-staffed to cope. One week we had to try four hostelries before we found one that could feed us!

With the increased uncertainty that Omicron and Plan B are binging about, there may yet be more pubs biting the dust. The story isn't all bad, though; some places are re-opening after a long spell closed. I'm eagerly anticipating lunch in late February at The Green Man in Tunstall, which has been shut for a couple of years or more.

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As I write this, many of us are looking forward to the Thursday Rides Christmas Lunch, once again at the Cretingham Bell. It's an indication of how we've bounced back from lockdown that no fewer than 40 of us will be sitting down to our turkey this year.

And one more thing - so far no rides have had to be called off because of the weather! Am I tempting fate?

Richard Watson

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Ken Dwight

Ken died in a care home on 28th September 2021 and a good number of his CTC friends attended his funeral. He loved cycling and had been a cyclist all his life. Even after a diagnosis of mixed dementia in early 2020 Ken still continued to regularly cycle alone for as long as dementia allowed.

Ken is fondly remembered by those participating in Suffolk CTC club rides; many members benefited from his individual acts of help and kindness. He was a lively, larger than life character who joined in with club events and tours for over 20 years. Who could forget Ken's enthusiastic singing at the Lawford cyclists' carol services? As we learned at the memorial service this was hardly surprising as he was a member of Tendring Male Voice Choir.

On a personal note, we both have some extremely happy memories of cycling with Ken starting with our first chat at a chance meeting in the pub in Wix where we think he was sheltering from the rain. Well that was his excuse for having a second pint before leaving for home anyway! Some time later we all received an invitation to a BBQ organised by Ken and his wife, Terry in their Kirby le Soken garden.

In 2013, a small CTC group (6 men and 3 women) very much enjoyed Ken's leadership and organisation of a short trip to France & Belgium. Needless to say there was much hilarity especially over meals where good food, wine & Belgian beer were enjoyed by us all after each day's cycling. At a Sunday morning coffee stop on the tour we were surprised to find the locals making even more noise than we did!



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After retiring from teaching, Ken was able to ride regularly with the Thursday group and devote more time to his family on Sundays. The lives of many Suffolk CTC members were enriched by his company, conversation, laughter.

Margaret & Philip Hancock

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Memories, memories!

by Ken Nichols

The autumn edition of W.W had some excellent articles in it and four items brought back some memories.

The first was in Secretary's notes, where John said he had been a CTC member for 28 years and it made me realise that I have been a member for 63 years and Maureen for 64 years. Gosh how time flies.

The second item that drew my attention was the mention in Pete Smith's article on Ray Booty and his achievements. I wonder how many of you know that he was born in Ipswich. About 10 years ago the Ipswich Society asked for recommendations for Blue Plaques in the town. Maureen and I researched details of Ray Booty, he was born in 1932 at 42 Benacre Road, Ipswich. We thought we could ask for a plaque on the house but the owner was reluctant at that time, so his recognition will have to wait.

In Hedgewatchers piece a mention of Grimes Graves and ladders brought to mind how things have changed. In the late 50s and 60s we would have regular club rides to Grimes Graves and would climb down and grovel along the tunnels with our battery lamps, squeezing past sections of chalk and flint we would emerge eventually covered in white chalk. I hate to think what would have happened if one of us had got stuck in the narrow passageways. No Health and Safety then but what an annual adventure.

Then I came to the article My First Bike by David Etherington with a mention of Binda toe straps. Only that morning Maureen had broken a toe strap. Looking through my box of useful spares I found a new set of blue leather straps with the name Binda embossed in gold lettering. Just the ticket I thought but unfortunately they were too thick to fit the slots in the pedals. Beautifully designed in thick leather probably to fit smart Campag pedals but not with "Maximum Gains" in mind, so they were returned to the stock box.

Many thanks for the memories Winged Wheel conjured up for me and can't wait for the Winter edition.

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Susan's 2021 tandem riding

I appreciate my partner taking me out on the tandem. On most Sunday mornings from June of last year (2020) we have been out and about. At first we tried lots of different routes from Ipswich returning home for 11's.

More recently we have settled on a regular route out through Bedstead village, along the old A12 to Capel St Mary and home via Wenham Lane, Elm Lane and Grove Lane back to Belstead and Ipswich. This route provides a range of riding from wide roads to lanes. We have seen the changing seasons through the winter, spring and summer both on the farm fields and the flowers on the verges.

We usually see walkers and other cyclists both known to us and others. We also see the horse riders, who often have set out from the stables by Club Farm at Washbrook. At the farm we have seen the life of the beef calves from a young age in the sheds through to the summer when they are out on the fields, almost as big as the parents.

When we get home we have tea and cakes in my summerhouse.

Susan Page and Paul Remblance

Photo: Primrose time at Gt Wehnam. I think they are cowslips! (Ed)



John Thompson has asked that his letter to Greater Anglia be included in Winged Wheel, I also attach the reply for information. (Judy Scott, Editor)

Jonathan Denby Esq
Abellio Greater Anglia
Dear Jonathan

19th October 2021

Tip-up seats in cycle spaces

I wish to explain my concerns about this.

Firstly, with the extra capacity of the new rolling stock, I question the need for tip-up seats. That said, I appreciate why you want to cover as much as possible for exceptional situations. I also realise TOCs have been under political pressures concerning adequate seating. However, I feel there needs to be compromise because I fear there could be altercations between cyclists and other customers, if there have not been already. They might so far have been avoided by cyclists putting their bikes in vestibules if the seats were in use. That goes against the automated announcement on stations asking cyclists to ensure they put their bikes in the official area.

I will deal firstly with the Great Eastern rolling stock. As bikes have to be reserved, it seems reasonable cyclists should expect to be able to use the space in the same sense customers with reserved seats should be able to use them. With respect, I don't think it is realised what a niggling concern it is that the seats might be occupied. It does somewhat take the edge off the enjoyment of travelling by train. You explained the cycle symbol gives cyclists an argument if people are difficult about moving. I am unconvinced it would count for much and, even so, why should cyclists doing as asked experience hostility? I am far from suggesting all non-cyclist customers would be hostile to being asked to move. However, having to request others to move is not pleasant anyway. Especially if, for example, they are elderly people, perhaps with mobility issues, or a pregnant lady. For cyclists who have paid attention to the automated announcements, it is a double whammy. They are doing as asked only to find the space occupied and despite having reserved it. I believe there should at least be a prominent notice explaining customers might have to give up the tip-up seats if any cycles come on board. More effectively, I suggest the tip-up seats should be blocked off accordingly when cycles are reserved. It should be done from the start even if Liverpool Street or Norwich are not the boarding stations. A notice in the cycle storage area advises luggage can be placed there if trains are busy. I think it invites all sorts of problems and hostile situations. That said, if no cycles are reserved, I understand the logic in allowing customers to put luggage there. However, I suggest it should be for guards to announce whether it can, and the notice should make that clear. Customers will tend to have different perceptions of "busy," and many will conveniently ignore it.

Concerning local services, the situation is somewhat different as cycles are on a first-come, first-served basis. I acknowledge I have not yet experienced any difficulties relating to the tip-up seats, and have not witnessed or heard of any, That is not to say they could not happen, and I believe there is a moral point. As there is an automated announcement asking cyclists to store their bikes in the official area, it should, in fairness, work the other way too. Again, I believe there should be a prominent notice at the storage area advising customers they might have to give up their seat/s if bikes come on board and guards should announce it.

I now make a general observation on the tip-up seats. I recently put my bike on the 14:30 from Liverpool Street. I had no difficulty getting my bike in the official area but probably because I was just in time. The three

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other tip-up seats got used. It was a busy train but was not used to capacity. When the guard came through, he explained to two young ladies sitting in the luggage compartments that if they moved further up they would have a carriage almost to themselves. The guard did not say anything to those using the tip-up seats. Arguably, however, they discouraged customers from using the train to capacity. At the time, customers were still being encouraged to wear face masks, so presumably you wanted them to also socially distance as much as possible. In any case, I also assume you want customers to use the capacity of the new trains anyway. It goes to my point about guards explaining the tip-up seats on local services. When trains have plenty of empty seats, it seems appropriate to advise customers of that and that the tip-up seats are primarily for exceptional situations.

Two further points before moving on. First, while I doubt it makes a big difference, matters are perhaps not helped by the fact the cycle symbol is not prominent at all. Second, I acknowledge there are cyclists who make no attempt to put their bikes in the official area. Unnecessary use of the tip-up seats, combined with an announcement that could seem contradictory, does not help enforcement.

Now a slight change of subject. I am supportive of the first-come, first-served policy for bikes on local services. I do, however, believe there is a case for allowing reservations for those on longer journeys involving services requiring reservations. You stated cycle reservations are necessary on Great Eastern services because many cyclists use them for longer journeys, involving services requiring reservations. Ironically, when I take my bike on the East Suffolk line to change onto a Great Eastern service at Ipswich that is what I am doing. That is often for journeys beyond London. Likewise, when I travel to Norwich to connect to EMR services. I accept there are in practice few problems getting bikes on local services. Nonetheless, for those of us on longer journeys requiring reservations, it is unnerving. Living at Oulton Broad, it is easy enough for me to cycle to Lowestoft, and the fare is the same as from Oulton Broad. I am usually the first to put a bike onboard at Lowestoft, as I am in time for the train's arrival. For anyone further along either line, however, it is not so simple. In any case, that I can reasonably easily use Lowestoft station is not the point. It adds not insignificantly to the length of my travelling day, and I should feel confident about using my nearest station. I appreciate the issue would be proof the customer is going on a journey requiring cycle reservations, but it would surely not be insurmountable. I can envisage undesirable situations for guards with cyclists on longer reserved journeys wanting to board local services. If there already are six bikes on board, I can envisage the cyclist desperately pleading. Would the guard feel he must tell one of the other cyclists to get off? The guard might stretch a point instructing the cyclist to stand with the bike in the vestibule. That would not be what is wanted. It would also not be possible if the train was 'standing room only.'

In conclusion, I accept the possibility of friction between different types of customers cannot be eliminated completely, no matter how much is done. At the moment, however, I feel there are aspects that somewhat invite it and are unfair to cyclists. At the same time, I want to say, I have always regarded GA (and as your predecessors) as one of the better TOC managements for considering cyclists. I accept you value us and it involves difficult balancing judgements. The 50% increase in the maximum number of bikes that can be officially carried and a generally better storage area (despite the tip-up seats!) are considerable improvements. They seem to have had the desired effect.

I hope this letter is helpful and that you give consideration to the points I raise.

I would be happy to receive a reply by email: johntommo6@btinternet.com.

Thank you in anticipation and best regards.

Yours sincerely

John Thompson

cc: Jamie Burles (GA Managing Director), Alan Neville (GA Customer Engagement Manager) East Suffolk Travel Association

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Mr. John Thompson
136 Dell Road
Oulton Broad
Lowestoft
Suffolk
NR33 9NT

22 October 2021

Dear Mr. Thompson,

Thank you for the letter you sent to Jonathan Denby dated 19 October 2021 regarding tip up seats in cycle spaces.

My name is Steve Farrell and I work within the Senior Customer Contacts Team here in Norwich. Jonathan is on leave at the moment, and I have been asked to make direct contact with you on his behalf.

Please allow me to begin by thanking you for the detailed feedback you have provided regarding the design of the cycle storage areas onboard our Stadler trains. All customer feedback is appreciated and taken into consideration where possible.

It is worth noting that since our new Stadler trains started entering service back in July 2019 they have received very positive feedback. They are a significant improvement on the previous trains that used to operate on the rural lines across the East Anglia network. They have helped us to provide much needed increased capacity in addition to better accessibility, and extra benefits such as Wi-Fi and plug sockets. I note that the concerns you have raised all relate to the tip up seats that are located in the cycle areas.

At present, these seats have not caused any reason for concern as it seems they are being used appropriately during the majority of journeys. They were installed on our trains for additional seating during the initial design phase due to the requirement to meet a seating capacity remit set at the time by the Government.

We made the designs of our new trains available to the public prior to the trains being built, and we used a lot of the feedback to assist us in making some amendments to the designs.

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The initial designs were shared with the public on the Greater Anglia website back in 2017, including the layouts and interior/exterior design visuals. The visuals included a 360 panotour of train interiors so that customers could see details in 3D. There was an option for customers to comment and we received over 1000 comments in total. All feedback (from customer engagement and user testing) was grouped together and taken onboard which is the reason why we made some modifications to the design including the choice of seat.

The train designs and an example of seating were also on display at several roadshows we ran at major stations across the route over a three month period. The roadshows took place in 2017 at Norwich, Cambridge, Broxbourne, London Liverpool Street, Chelmsford and Colchester. There were further ones in 2018 at London Liverpool Street, Colchester Culver Square shopping centre, Ipswich, Norwich, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Witham, Manningtree, Billericay, Ely, Bishops Stortford and Harlow Town.

All the services operated by a Stadler train (Great Eastern Mainline and Rural routes) have a Conductor onboard. As cycle reservations are required on InterCity services, the Conductor can ensure that the cycle spaces are not occupied by customers sitting on the tip up seats whilst walking through the train. During the pandemic, we recognise that this may not have been done as ticket checks were not being carried out due to safety reasons. However, Conductors should now be carrying out their usual duties onboard our services.

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The feedback you provided has been shared with the Conductor Management team so that they can ensure all Conductors are briefed. They should be ensuring that if a cycle boards a train, then it is in the designated space. This means that they would be within their rights to request customers in the tip up seats to sit somewhere else if they were preventing a cycle from being stored. However, it is important to note that Conductors have not reported any problems with the current system and again, feedback has been positive.

With regards to your comments about cycles having reservable spaces on the rural routes, I am afraid this has never been possible and still is not. This is because reservations are all made (seat and cycles) through a central system that is provided by Network Rail. Only selected services are in that system, and they include longer distance InterCity or cross-country style routes. Rural services do not have an option for reservations and therefore it is with regret that we cannot implement this.

I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank you for your detailed feedback. I have ensured that it has been passed on to the relevant teams so that it can be taken into consideration where possible.

Thank you once again for getting in touch.

Regards,

Steve Farrell
Senior Customer Contacts Team
Greater Anglia

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The Future of Boxted Bridge

From Michael Scott

Many regular club riders will be familiar with Boxted Bridge crossing the River Stour by Boxted Mill. This is one of my favourite places and I always make a point of pausing to take in the tranquil riverside setting, which has been relatively unchanged for the last 200 years or more. The bridge is considered a non-designated Heritage Asset because of its setting by the Mill and within the Dedham Vale AONB. It is of an unusual steel girder construction from about 1900, and is one of only two or three similar bridges surviving from that period.

Despite local protests and the report of Essex County Council's own Heritage Assessment, which recommends that the existing bridge should be sympathetically restored, Essex Highways are pressing for Planning Consent to demolish the existing bridge and replace it with a wider structure.

Full information on this can be found on the website [Change.org](https://www.change.org) - Save our Bridge! together with the opportunity to put your name to a petition in support of preserving a part of our heritage.

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Mike Havard sent this in a while ago and, for some reason I overlooked it, partly because the print was so small, but, on cutting and pasting it, it's OK and rather a good read. (ED)

TO WALK OR RIDE?

It's often said that I'm soft in the head,
but why would I stride when I could go for a ride?
I don't understand why would I stand
when I can sit on my best Brookes kit.
I don't want a medal, I'd just rather pedal.
So why would I hike when I can go by bike?
On the tandem we go on roads random,
we're not side by side but together we ride.
So why would we stride when we can go for a ride?
If you want to stroll far you need the car
and that's a pain and there's not much to gain.
But what I like, about the bike,
is right from the door you're ready to explore.

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But!

Ann likes to walk, so together we talk,
and after a task of some great size, we finally come to a compromise.
Now on vacation, when exploring our nation,
there's no clash of wills, we just take to a hills,
forgetting the bike, while we go for a hike☺



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Hadleigh

Wolsey Road Club 60th Anniversary celebration

The Wolsey Road Club was started in 1961 by a group of enthusiastic young Suffolk CTC members to enable them to race under the relevant racing organisations. 60 years on and the Club is still active but in a smaller way. In August a Celebration Afternoon Tea was held at Rushmere Village Hall Ipswich where 38 members and former members gathered to chat and reminisce. Four of the founder members were present, Michael Scott and Colin Wilkinson who both cycled to the event and Ken and Maureen Nichols. A fifth founder was John Blackmore now living in Aberdeen who sent his best wishes

It is a tribute to the longevity of cyclists that so many are still active in cycling after 60 years.

Maureen Nichols

Wolsey Road Club President.

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It will be good that club trophies will be presented again this year. The Club Personality of the Year Trophy will, however be presented at the AGM in May 2022 and, if you would like to nominate someone to receive it, please contact a member of the committee. It is worth bearing in mind, that this trophy was not awarded in 2020 so, 2 years need to be considered and it is not awarded for cycling as such but, goes to someone who has done something over and above the call of duty for the club. (Ed)

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BOOK YOUR SEAT NOW & JOIN US

Sunday 30th January 2022

Wolsey RC and CTC Suffolk

58th joint Lunch and Prize Presentation

UFFORD PARK WOODBRIDGE

Yarmouth Road, Melton, IP12 1QW

12.30 for 1pm sit down

Bookings to Trevor Roberts 01473 712568 or trev1974@gmail.com.

Three ways to pay - Cheques payable to "Wolsey Road Club",

Cash or via bank transfer into Wolsey Account 30978078 sort 20-44-51

(if paying via transfer please drop me a line)

**** Take a break from cold and wet cycle rides**

to applaud the achievements of your riding companions**

Three courses £25.00 pp.

(Tea & Coffee no longer included but can be purchased with other drinks)

Your Names

Your choices

NAME	STARTER	MAIN	DESSERT	TEA/COFFEE

Starters:

- A. Leek and potato soups, topped with crispy leeks (V+, GF)
- B. Smooth Brussels pate, stokes red onion marmalade, toasted ciabatta (GFor)
- C. Cold water prawns on a bed of baby leaves, lemon and dill crème fraiche (GF)

Mains:

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D. Roast chicken breast, sage and onion stuffing, roast potatoes, seasonal vegetables (GFoR))

E. Oven-baked fillet of salmon, cream white wine and chive sauce, new potatoes (GF)

F. Winter vegetable wellington, roast potatoes, vegetable gravy (V+)

Desserts:

G. Seasonal fruit crumble, custard

H. Dark chocolate and brownie torte, vanilla pod Chantilly cream (V)

J. Duo of Suffolk cheeses, selection of biscuits, celery, grapes and fruit chutney (GFoR)

NOTE – I MUST HAVE ALL ORDERS BY JANUARY 10TH.

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The logo for Action Outdoors Ltd features the word 'ACTION' in a bold, black, sans-serif font, a blue globe icon, and the words 'OUTDOORS LTD' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

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Overheard on the ride.

By Nicola Halton

A collection of snippets of conversation recorded after club rides in pre Covid times.

'I think the answer is to cut an inch or two off'.

'Can I get in please. I would like to speak to my husband.'

'I'm not riding round to yours with Meals on Wheels'.

'Am I in charge or not?'

'You're going to get a puncture'

'Do I detect a degree of unwillingness to carry me home?'

'You know you can't get a word in edgeways with this lot'.

'Does anyone want to come home with me?'

'What are you doing with that bit of elastic?'

'What do you weigh then?... That's lighter than my bike'

'Bit more cycling and a bit more mending would be good'.

'I feel as if I haven't eaten enough asparagus, this season'.

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John Thompson in the Scottish Borders Part 2

Bamburgh to Holy Island and return (37 miles in round figures)

Breakfast was good with lots of choices. I admit, however, to being boringly English opting for the full English. Well, I was cycling!

I had checked tide times for the island online. It indicated it would be safe to cross from 11.20. As it was just approx 16 miles I put my paperback in the pannier thinking I might need to kill some time waiting at the causeway.

I didn't take the direct route to Belford. The hotel is on a minor road out of Bamburgh, which runs broadly parallel with the B6342. The map isn't clear but I think it might be the B6341. I followed it with the intention of turning right to join the B6342. However, when close to the lane I had intended turning onto, I spotted another nice looking lane a few yards further on, also to the right, with no signpost. It tempted me to be adventurous. Nicely, four riders came off the lane and explained where it



went. It sounded about right for me so I followed it (yes, it was picturesque). When I junctioned with the B6342, I did a right and immediate left onto another lane, without checking the map. That said, it didn't cause a problem. I passed through Easington as I had intended. It was after passing through Elwick I realised I was on the road I had intended avoiding as the route involved a spurt on the A1. I have to blame my bad map reading. I wasn't inclined to turn back, resolving to put up with the A1 spurt. It was just a few hundred yards, and I was able to ride on the hard shoulder. The 'compensation' was that the lane I turned left onto was picturesque, passing through the hamlet of Buckton. At the t-junction, I turned right onto another lane, which put me back on the 'Way' for the final miles to the island. Again, the lane was picturesque in itself and, while overlooking the A1 was hardly scenic, overlooking the perfect blue sea was. The route goes through East Kyloe and West Kyloe, after which there is a fast descent to the A1, where there is a dedicated cyclists' crossing, with a central refuge. Then it was the final 5 miles to the island. I arrived at the causeway at 11.23, i.e. just 3 minutes after the start of low tide so perfect timing. It meant I had no use for my paperback so I chuckled about having caused myself unnecessary extra 'weight.' The causeway is approx 3 miles, but with the breeze from the sea creating something of a headwind it seemed to go on. That doesn't mean it was boring. On the contrary, like all causeways I've experienced, with the sea and sand dunes, despite being flat it has its own beauty and character.

I took my time on the island, exploring and taking photos, There are two cafes, so I sat outside at one of them, having a light bite and relaxing in the sun for a while.

For the return ride, initially I retraced, which involved climbing the hill I had descended to the A1. It was a fair climb. After West Kyloe, I now followed the lane direct to Belford. It enabled me to cover a few more miles of the 'Way.' It included the picturesque hamlet of Deschant, and Belford is worth seeing. Coming into Belford the earlier climb was compensated for by descending a 1 in 10. If I had done my original intended route I would have had to climb it. I chuckled that putting up with the A1 spurt had been worthwhile. Seriously, it had been because, ironically, overall it enabled a more varied lanes route. In Belford I spent a few minutes sitting in the town square with my customary soft drink and Magnum. Yes, with just 6 miles to go but I was touring!



In the evening I ate at The Castle pub, obviously the most popular local watering hole. It had a nice atmosphere and good ales. A couple also staying at the Sunningdale hotel came in. It led to one of those well meaning but classic conversations one often has with non-cyclists. The lady asked me about my day so I explained I had cycled to Holy Island. She replied, "You

should have said, we could have taken you in the car.” “It’s only 16 miles,” I responded. After pondering a moment she replied, “I suppose that’s not too bad.” I said nothing about it being 16 miles back, plus I did some detours. I also mentioned nothing about the fine sea views from the picturesque lane as opposed to them being on the A1 looking at traffic. She commented that I didn’t have parking problems!

Bamburgh – Galashiels (64½ miles in round figures)

The route I chose initially retraced to Belford, then further retraced a short way along the B6349 toward Wooler. Instead of turning left toward Wooler I continued on the B6349 to immediately tackle a brute of a hill. My effort was rewarded when I turned right onto the lane signposted “North Hazelrigg.” It was the most scenic road of the trip. The ‘poetic justice’ was that the best of it was on the descent! After the descent, it was a nice relief to have a few miles of relatively gentle terrain (much like the undulating parts of Suffolk) along pleasant lanes, with more sea views to Lowick. As it turned out, I now had another approx 32 miles of relatively gentle terrain, but it was because it was predominantly main roads. From Lowick I followed the B6353 to join the A697 to Coldstream. Once on the open and relatively flat main road it was obvious the wind was getting up and it was against me, it proved the toll on my legs from the continual hard riding after the audax was still there. It was enough to tempt me to stop for a drink at Cornhill-on-Tweed, just before Coldstream, home to the guards regiment of the same name. It’s picturesque and has an interesting history. It’s the location from where Edward I invaded Scotland in 1296. From there, it was the A698 to Kelso. In Kelso, back in Scotland, I detoured to the town centre. It was lunchtime so I bought a sandwich pack and crisps, a Magnum and a soft drink. I sat enjoying the sun in the town square, admiring and taking photos of the picturesque old-world town centre. Coldstream and Kelso are worth visiting. They really did make the miles along, not horrendously busy, main roads worthwhile. My tired legs, combined with enjoying relaxing in the sun, meant I had to somewhat force myself away. It was shortly after leaving the town centre that my first session of navigational ‘fun’ started. Seemingly, every road was signposted, except the one I wanted, the A699 to St Boswells. It caused me an unnecessary steep climb on the wrong road and a grotty ride round the busy ring road. The couple I nabbed for help directed me onto the nearby pedestrian/cycleway to turn left once back on-road. Ironically, it was nice ‘compensation’ because it was picturesque, running alongside the River Tweed. Back on-road and after consulting a helpful young man, I was at last on the A699 to St Boswells. The headwind was now even stronger. While stopped at some roadworks traffic lights another cyclist came along. As he had ridden from Holy Island we had probably done a similar distance so far that day. However, I doubt he’d had the continual daily tough riding I’d had, plus he was carrying less and probably at least 30 years younger than me. It was, therefore, reassuring he too was finding the headwind hard. He was also going to Galashiels. For the reasons mentioned, however, I knew there was no way I would hold his wheel. A pity because he would probably have saved me my second lot of navigational ‘fun,’ I admit it was down to bad map reading and muddled thinking on my

part. After St Boswells, I found myself back on the off-road section of the 'Way' Lovely as it is, I could have done without it at that late stage, especially as it involved a steep climb.. When I crossed the A68, I realised I should have followed it for the short distance from St Boswells to join the 'Way' from there. Continuing to retrace the 'Way' involved two steep climbs. The gentle terrain was over, cruelly, right at the end! On joining the A6091, I saw a sign for Galashiels. I decided to tolerate the main roads (partly the A7) for the few miles left rather than follow the 'Way' Ironically, it presented an opportunity for the rail geek in me. The A6091 runs past the former up platform of the former Melrose station so I stopped to take photos (the building is fully restored, grade A listed). A cycle/pedestrian way runs through the station. To the left the sign indicates Tweedmouth. Obviously it's the trackbed of the former Waverley line. I guessed it should provide a reasonably simple and quiet route to Galashiels. A passing lady utility cyclist confirmed it giving me directions. Yes, I found Galashiels easily. That said, in a quiet part of Tweedmouth, I double-checked with the only pedestrian around that Galashiels was straight on. She was a stunningly attractive young lady – yes, she WAS the only pedestrian around!

I arrived at Watson Lodge at about 17:45. considerably later than I should have but hardly horrendous.

After showering, I unwound in the Wetherspoon over food and beer. Digressing, it seems unlikely Wetherspoons is going to reinstate its bigger menu. It puts my loyalty in doubt.

For the train journey home, it's my recurring theme of sitting back reflecting on another great cycling trip with more boxes ticked.

Riding away from Oulton Broad North station, I immediately changed to the big ring!

Two days later I was supposed to be riding the Essex Rivers and Reservoirs 200 km audax from Witham. I settled for the 100!



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Brittany by Tim Edmonds Part 2

A grey morning saw us looking for an alternative onward route that didn't involve the hill we'd careered down the previous evening. Helpful local said it was possible to take bikes around the lake to the road, about six kms, with care. We tried.

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Lakeside walk was more like a trek through the Hindu Kush. Push bike. Stop. Unload bike. Lift bike over boulders. Stop. Return for panniers. Load bike. Return for second bike, repeat, repeat, repeat. After an hour, and less than a km, much shouting, we accepted the inevitable and retreated back at ground zero two hours later. While Harriet sobbed in the toilet, I persuaded an unsuspecting camper-van owner to put our bikes on his empty bike rack and take us up the hill. The van groaned its way up the hill and left us in the gloom of an increasingly deserted, grey and hilly central Brittany. The rain started.

Lunch, in the dry, with real tables and a real menu was our modest aim. Refreshed, I looked at the rain and the alarming number of contour lines between where we'd been dropped and where we were aiming. On the map, Pontivy was a bit south of our route, but near. It looked big, was sort of downhill and it had a train station, so get there, sort out a train and go north to flatter lands near the coast. I asked in the café, "Is there a station at Pontivy?" "Oui".

We got to Pontivy late in the evening, just before tourist info shut. I asked about the train options. "There are no trains". "But there's a station?" "Yes but its closed. There are buses/coaches from the station you might be able to put your bikes on that, you'll need to ask". Too stunned for shouting I reported to management. Plan B. hotel, check out station.

It was true. There was a station, and it was for sale. Weeds grew amongst the tracks. Status report: we'd gone south rather than north, and our interest in all things Breton had already put us a bit behind schedule for getting back to the ferry. Rethink time.

We went to the station early next morning. First coach, full of commuters, no chance of two laden bikes making it on board. "Try later" advised the driver. We tried later. 'Later' was full of shoppers. "Early afternoon is your best bet", or would have been if the Pontivy High School, under 16s soccer team, coaches and supporters had not been off to a tournament. With the next bus probably full of shoppers we needed to regroup.

Back to tourist info and flicking through the maps there a flicker of Plan C emerged. Let's cycle downriver, and get to the train service south of here and go north by train. Management reluctantly agreed.

Five o'clock that evening we set off down the Blavet canal, destination Hennebont, with a tourist map (possibly drawn by the much younger siblings of said Pontivy under 16s footie team), which showed 60 kms (south) of tow-path between us and a train back. Reasons to be cheerful: the rain had stopped, it was all downhill and every canal has locks, and every lock has flat grassy ground for a passable wild pitch. Less encouraging we had no idea what was ahead and Harriet had never wild camped in her life.

30kms later, in the gathering gloom, fed (we'd found a pizza place on the canal), tent up by a lock, we'd escaped Pontivy at least. The rest was going to be a doddle.

Up, and cycling down the mist-hung river just after dawn was wonderful. It was as though we were the only people alive. Into a silent, still world, we rumbled down the tow-path, rudely waking the wildlife who normally call this their time.



Dawn.

Hungry, but happy, we rolled into Hennebont about nine and cycled up to the station which sat at the top of town. Well, the station wasn't for sale but less welcome, in light of our deadline, was that the next train was in five hours, destined for somewhere we knew not where. We retired to the café at the bottom of the hill to consider plans D, E and further down the alphabet.

Status report II: we had no maps, no way of knowing where we were other than that we were about 100 kms south of where we wanted to be, the ferry clock was starting to tick loudly for departure the next day.

Local knowledge assured us that L'Orient was the major rail junction and if we got there we could surely get the train to St. Malo in time. 'Local knowledge', had failed us twice already, but there really was no alternative to cycling 25 kms or so, further south, and thereby cross a peninsular we had originally aimed to cycle through the middle of.

It was hot, big hills, noisy roads. Navigation was a combo of keeping the sun on your nose and photographing roadside bus timetables to give a few names of places that we might tick off as we road. Too tired for shouting. My worst moment was when we reached a huge roundabout, we knew we were not far from L'Orient, but every exit went to one of the two motorways we were above. Just before we had to delve even deeper in the alphabet for a new plan, a tractor chugged past. It seemed to be going south. "That can't be going on the motorway" I yelled and as one we leapt on our steeds and chased it. It disappeared down a small, hidden, road, it went down and down. Down to the sea. Down to L'Orient. It felt like we'd escaped Colditz.

The rest of the trip was a bit of an anti-climax. We rolled into L'Orient. There was a rail station, with trains. The lady behind the desk said there was no problem getting to St. Malo and gave us the tickets (I nearly proposed to her in gratitude).

Waiting, I bought L'Equipe, and 17 pages in after French football (but no mention of the Pontivy result), the junior regional cycling reports and volleyball, was the story that Chelsea had won the league. Life looked very good, and simple, once more.

As a postscript, this year's Tour had a stage ending in Pontivy. The coverage included a drone camera shot of the town and swept over the station. I can confirm that if anyone wants to buy a railway station in Brittany.....



Made it!

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Over the Hedge

I used to live in London for a while, many years ago. I didn't realise it at the time, but I was living on an island. It made me wonder if living in Ipswich might be similar.

I don't mean that I lived on the Isle of Dogs or on one of the eyots in the River Thames. What I hadn't understood at the time was that large urban areas can create an **Urban Heat Island Effect**. The effect means that urban areas can be significantly warmer than the surrounding rural areas especially during the summer and winter. The larger the urban area grows, the greater the urban heat island effect.

One of the principal causes of the effect is the change in land surface. As a highly populated area spreads, more land is covered by concrete, brick, steel and asphalt. All these surfaces are relatively dark and absorb energy much better than light coloured surfaces that are more likely to reflect the energy back into the air. So during the day, urban areas absorb a lot of energy from the sun and build up heat. At night, that energy is released, warming the urban environment much more than in the surrounding rural area.

In addition, there are far fewer plants in the urban area. During the day, plants draw water from the ground through their roots and this passes to the leaves where it is used in photosynthesis to produce food and energy for the plant. The water then passes through small pores in the leaves, maintaining the flow of water through the plant and cooling the surrounding environment with water vapour. I'm sure we have all enjoyed cycling through the cool roads in Rendlesham or Thetford Forest on a hot summer day. Fewer trees in the urban areas reduce this natural shade and air-conditioning.

In major cities where space is at a premium, architects and planners are building upwards. Rows of tall buildings lining streets can create a **Canyon Effect**. Here, the tall buildings

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absorb even more energy that is trapped in the street, creating even higher temperatures during the day and evening. They can also funnel winds and trap polluted air.

So does the Urban Heat Island Effect affect Ipswich or other local towns? Certainly, our urban areas appear to be expanding at the moment, with many new developments around our towns. One sign that intrigued me was cycling out of Ipswich during a recent cold winter.

I was heading up Museum Street towards the Crown Street crossing. As I passed a few small trees, I became aware that the branches were covered in chattering birds. Closer inspection revealed them to be Pied Wagtails.

Since then, I have also seen the same behaviour at the Copdock Tesco supermarket, where the birds gather in the car park and on the roof before heading into suitable trees for the night. It is probably a group of females and first year males who behave in this way, seeking the warmth of an urban area and each other for a safe overnight roost in cold weather. Groups of several hundred can assemble in different localities. Adult males are more likely to remain alone and defend a feeding territory.

Away from urban areas, wagtails may use a reedbed as a safe refuge. Along the Suffolk coast we have some magnificent reedbeds such as at Walberswick and Dunwich. These often provide great opportunities to see flocks of Starlings assemble into a murmuration swirling around the skies forming wonderful patterns in the air before they descend to the reedbed for the night. In another area, I read about a farmer with three acres of glasshouses for strawberry growing who counted 450 wagtails leaving in the morning, having enjoyed a warm and safe evening inside.

Our pied wagtails are mostly resident in the UK all year around, but many move south over winter, especially those who live on higher ground. So now is a good opportunity to see them. If you go into an urban area at dusk, do keep an ear open around the streets where there are trees planted. You may be lucky and find a group taking advantage of a small Urban Heat Island Effect.

Best wishes for the coming year.

Hedgewatcher

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Pete Stanley November 1943 –October 2021

Peter joined Suffolk CTC in the early 1970's and tried his legs at racing with the Wolsey Road Club in 1973. His main love was cycle touring in all its forms, hard club rides, foreign touring to the Pyrenees and the Alps and an epic trip to New Zealand with his bike.

His other cycling passion was Tuesday evening rides with a group of club members, heading out into the Suffolk countryside and a local pub to put the world to rights over a pint or two. Spring, summer, autumn and into the dark, wet nights of winter. He really was "Mr Tuesday" as he won the Attendance Tankard year after year.

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Pete was not renowned for over-cleaning his cycle but was meticulous in checking the mileage on his chains and tyres before renewal. His trademark was his saggy saddlebag with his Daily Telegraph strapped on the back.

He lived in Suffolk most of his life, despite being born in Lancashire but always retained many northern expressions and did not adopt the lazy Ipswich dialect. He was very much his own man and delighted in regularly walking down to "Jack's Cafe" on London Road for breakfast and to read his paper. He did it for so many years that perhaps there should be a blue plaque fixed to the front. He always told his club mates that he would retire at 40 but he missed this date by a bit.

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THE LOST HALL OF EDWARDSTONE

By Michael Scott

It was a grey and damp, but mild, November morning as we left Crown Pools for our club ride on Remembrance Sunday 2021. After the usual welcome at Maureen and Ken's, fortified with ample helpings of coffee and cakes, the weather improved as we meandered through the quiet lanes via Polstead and Boxford. We were rewarded with lovely clear views across the Box Valley.



The sun was shining brightly as we passed through the red brick gateway to Edwardstone Church, tucked away from the road; so quiet and peaceful for our picnic lunch. I was intrigued by the impressive gateway, far too grand for an entrance to a village church, so I decided to investigate further.

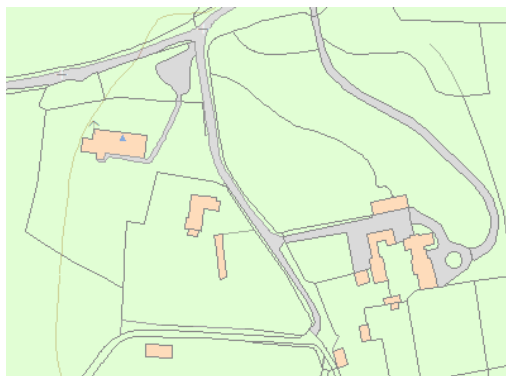
The most recent building on the site of Edwardstone Hall was built in 1832, described as a red brick mansion in Mock Tudor style, and demolished in 1952. The remaining buildings are the original Coach House, converted to a residence, and the red brick Temple Bar gatehouse and lodge. This was built in 1840 and modelled on London's original western entrance at Temple Bar, hence the name it now bears.

There is evidence to suggest there may have been a building on the current site as long ago as the 12th Century when the land was owned by the noble Anglo-Norman family of de Munchensey. The estate was later bought in 1598 by John Brand, a wealthy clothier of Boxford, whose daughter was married to John Morden. He was a wealthy merchant who founded Morden College in Blackheath (probably with his wife's money), a charity which still provides residential care for the elderly. But that's another story!



It is recorded that there was certainly an Edwardstone Hall on the site in 1783, probably still in existence when the final Hall was built in 1832.

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Map showing location of the Temple Bar (centre top where the roads fork), the Church (on the left marked with a blue arrow), and the site of the Hall (near the buildings on the right of the map).

This is one of a number of grand houses in Suffolk (and all over the country) which were destroyed in the middle part of the 20th Century. Could this be the first of a series, I wonder?

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